

USSN. 09/828,175  
Examiner: FULLER, ERIC B  
Group A.U.: 1762  
September 24, 2002

- neither Harbaugh nor Hutton teaches or suggests the use of a magnetic layer; the safety elements disclosed therein employ traditional layers such as ink and/or aluminum.
- Mantegazza, notwithstanding the use of a magnetic layer, does not anticipate the present application because no laser beam is disclosed in it; magnetic regions are laid down only to form a bar code.
- Meyer teaches to act with a laser beam on a magnetic layer, but it concerns a very different field of application, i.e. magnetic media for data storage; no person skilled in the art of security elements for documents would ever read or search for a publication concerning hard disks in order to find suggestions for a security element.

In view of the above considerations, Applicant respectfully maintains that the person skilled in the art of forgery-proof security elements could not trivially achieve the present invention on the basis of the cited prior art documents. In other words, it is respectfully set forth that such an invention involves an inventive step.

It is also seen that proposed amendments do not add new subject matter to the original disclosure. Moreover, it is respectfully maintained that the proposed amendments clearly distinguish Applicant's invention from the cited prior art documents on one hand, and, at the same time, does not distress the scope of the claims in such a way that a new search or new examination be required.

In view of the foregoing, entry of the above amendment into the file and allowance of new claims 1-12 is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner believe that the application would be still pending because of minor deficiencies, an informal phone conversation or an Examiner's Amendment are kindly requested by the Applicant.

Version with markings to show changes made to the claims

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for manufacturing a security element for documents, forgery-proof labels, checks, ~~and seals and the like~~, comprising the steps of:  
providing a polyester backing layer, ~~and~~  
applying a covering layer to at least one face of said backing layer, ~~the method further comprising the steps of~~  
removing preset regions of said covering layer with a laser beam having a wavelength between 900 and 1200 nm, said preset regions defining a code which can be customized in any manner and detected in any manner, said laser beam acting on said covering layer through one of said backing layers, wherein said covering layer comprises a magnetic layer.
2. The method according to claim 1, wherein said covering layer further comprises ~~is constituted by ink.~~
3. The method according to claim 1, wherein said covering layer further comprises ~~is constituted by a metallic layer.~~
4. The method according to claim 1, wherein said covering layer further comprises ~~is constituted by an aluminum layer.~~
5. ~~The method according to claim 1, wherein said covering layer is constituted by a magnetic layer.~~
6. The method according to claim 1, comprising a second backing layer which is applied to the other face of said covering layer, ~~said laser beam acting on said covering layer through one of said backing layers.~~
7. The method according to claim 1, wherein said backing layer is constituted by a band or tape which can be separated in order to obtain threads, said band forming in succession a first region for obtaining optically detectable characters provided by means of conventional methods, said first regions being interleaved with regions for forming, in the covering layer, preset regions for obtaining said code which can be customized in any manner and detected in any manner.
8. The method according to claim 7, comprising, on said band, a region which can be coded and can be interleaved with said first region with optically detectable characters and with said region provided with a code which can be customized in any manner and detected in any manner.
9. The method according to claim 1, wherein said laser beam has a solid-state ~~source of the~~

~~Nd:Yag type~~ Nd:Yag source.

10. The method according to claim 1, wherein said laser beam has a ~~frequency~~ wavelength which is ~~preferably~~ comprised between 1030 and 1100 nm.

11. The method according to claim 1, wherein said laser beam has a wavelength of 1064 nm.

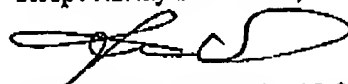
12. The method according to claim 1, wherein said step of removing said preset regions is performed while said backing layer is inserted in a sheet of paper.

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Respectfully submitted,



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